United Nations A/65/488

General Assembly

Distr.: General
4 October 2010

Original: English

Sixty-fifth session
Agenda item 121
Multilingualism

Multilingualism

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, which is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 63/306, addresses the role of multilingualism in the Secretariat, with reference to human resources; conference management; peacekeeping, security, political, legal and inspection offices and departments; humanitarian, economic, and social offices and departments; internal communication; and public information and outreach.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 63/306, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its sixty-fifth session, a comprehensive report on the implementation of its resolutions on multilingualism. The report provides an update on the various activities undertaken to promote multilingualism since the submission of the previous report on this subject (A/63/338) in 2008.

II. Multilingualism at the United Nations

A. Coordination of multilingualism

2. In response to the request of the General Assembly in its resolution 61/266, the Secretary-General on 29 May 2008 appointed the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information as Coordinator for Multilingualism.

3. In its resolution 63/306, the General Assembly called upon the Secretary-General to continue to develop the informal network of focal points in order to support the Coordinator. The Department of Public Information took on a coordination role and worked with the focal points to gather input.

B. Human resources management

1. Recruitment

4. The United Nations career portal, the new online platform for recruitment and talent management at the United Nations (http://careers.un.org), is published in English and French. Secretariat job vacancies are published in the two working languages, as are instructions and all other tools designed to facilitate the applications of potential candidates. Information on recruitment policies is available on the Organization's website in the six official languages of the United Nations. All vacancy announcements indicate that French and English are the two working languages of the Secretariat.

2. Language teaching

5. The language and communications programmes at Headquarters and offices away from Headquarters have continued to expand offerings, and to harmonize training policies and content among duty stations. A single system of levels for language learning is being implemented, along with common guidelines for methodology and certification. New courses have been added according to the needs of staff and departments ("Arabic-Levant dialect" or "Spanish for cooperation and development" are two recent examples). The regular language programme for all six official languages has two categories of courses: level courses in either regular or accelerated-learning formats and special courses, which focus on a specific skill or goal, such as correspondence writing, preparation for a language proficiency exam or conversation.

6. The average distribution of participants in courses in the six official languages shows a stable trend over the years: Arabic (10 per cent), Chinese (7 per cent),

English (25 per cent), French (35 per cent), Russian (6 per cent) and Spanish (17 per cent). While the total number of participants has increased significantly, the breakdown in the percentage of students participating in courses in each of the six languages has remained stable.

7. As an example, at the United Nations Office at Nairobi, there has been an increase in the number of students since the Language Programme began also providing access to its courses to staff at other United Nations offices and international organizations, e.g., the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Development Programme in Somalia, the United Nations Office for Project Services and the International Centre for Research in Agroforestry. In 2009, 843 students attended the language courses, whereas 965 students participated in 2010. The library at the United Nations Office at Nairobi now offers some movies in French and Spanish for students to improve their comprehension skills. Conversation sessions in Arabic, French and Spanish have also been launched.

8. In addition, upon departmental request and usually in connection with the working languages of a duty station, the language learning programme develops and offers courses that focus on the specialized communicative tasks, guidelines and language needs of a requesting department (e.g., "Writing for the web" and "Client-oriented French for security officers").

9. For the last six years, the United Nations Chinese Language Programme has offered an intensive three-week summer study programme in China. This programme is sponsored by the Government of China and hosted by Nanjing University, with support from the United Nations. It is open to all students taking Chinese classes in the language programmes of the United Nations Secretariat. In 2008 and 2009, a total of 87 participants from New York, Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi and Bangkok completed the programme.

3. Language-learning needs survey

10. A comprehensive language-learning needs analysis was developed and launched at Headquarters in December 2008 to gather information about work-related linguistic competencies and needs. The data collected was used to help teachers build programmes that are more adapted to the needs of the United Nations. A template of the survey can now be used at all duty stations in order to collect accurate and updated information. The United Nations Office at Geneva is preparing its own survey, to be conducted in early 2011.

4. Language proficiency examinations

11. The language proficiency examinations test the written and spoken skills of staff members in the six official languages of the United Nations. Staff members who successfully pass the exam in the given language qualify as proficient in that language as per administrative instruction ST/AI/1999/2, which regulates the system of language incentives in the Organization. A new information technology pedagogical tool was launched to enhance services to staff participating in programmes of the Office of Human Resources Management, and websites for each of the six language programmes were created (see www.un.org/staffdevelopment/lcp). A new language proficiency exam preparation website was made available to assist candidates in preparing for the English, French and Spanish examinations (see

www.un.org/exam/lpe). Preparation websites for the Arabic, Chinese and Russian language proficiency examinations are under development and will be launched in early 2011.

C. Department for General Assembly and Conference Management

1. Conference services

12. The Department for General Assembly and Conference Management is mandated to provide high-quality language and conference services to the United Nations; multilingualism is the thread that runs through all of its core activities. This includes interpretation, translation, editing, verbatim reporting and other language-support services. The Secretariat must ensure that equal treatment is given to all six official languages, as reiterated by the General Assembly on several occasions, most recently in its resolution 64/230 on the pattern of conferences.

2. Official documentation

13. The ability of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management to provide Member States with high-quality language services in a timely manner has been tested by such factors as the open-ended meeting mandate granted to the Human Rights Council, whereby there is no limit to the number of meetings the Council can hold.

14. With respect to the provision of parliamentary documents to the intergovernmental bodies, the Department remains in strict compliance with the rule of simultaneous distribution of official documents, under which no one language version of a document may be circulated unless all six official versions are ready for distribution. This is a reflection of the principle of equal treatment of all official languages.

15. Through proactive document-management measures, such as the introduction of workload sharing, capacity planning and the establishment of an interdepartmental task force, the Department seeks to ensure greater predictability and orderliness in the processing of documents that are critical to effective multilingual communication among delegations.

16. The Department has also managed to increase its overall compliance with the mandated issuance dates (from 65 per cent in 2007 and 71 per cent in 2008 to 75 per cent in 2009) despite continuing challenges stemming from the need to sometimes process unforeseen urgent or inordinately lengthy documents.

3. Outreach and succession planning

17. The Department for General Assembly and Conference Management remains committed to the principle that language staff are to be recruited only through international competitive examinations, which are conducted to fill vacancies in its various units in order to maintain its high standards in delivering language and conference services. The Department has taken a proactive approach to attracting and retaining language professionals as the Department goes through a demographic transition, as a consequence of which approximately 20 per cent of its language staff will have retired by 2016.

18. In early 2008, the Department launched an unprecedented and internally funded university outreach programme. The programme is aimed at assisting partner universities in all six official languages in equipping students in language professions with the skills required by the United Nations Language Services. The programme also offers serving staff a broader range of training opportunities to enhance their language skills.

19. As part of a broader outreach effort, the Department, in cooperation with European Union institutions and the African Development Bank, is about to launch an interpreter training pilot course at the University of Nairobi this year as a way of enlarging the pool of qualified interpreters trained in Africa for potential recruitment by organizations based on the continent. This project is designed in collaboration with the United Nations Office at Nairobi, starting with programmes in English, French, Kiswahili and Arabic.

20. The Department has undertaken, in consultation with the Office of Human Resources Management, a review of the entire competitive language examination structure and modalities in order to ensure that it is suited to the changing testing requirements and to potentially leverage new technological advances in testing methods.

D. Peacekeeping, security, political, legal and inspection offices and departments

1. Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support

21. Six of the fifteen peacekeeping operations and the special political mission administered by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations operate in French-speaking countries. Approximately 60 per cent of all peacekeepers are deployed in French-speaking countries, yet the majority of peacekeepers deployed in such countries do not speak French.

22. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is working to secure more French-speaking peacekeeping troops and police. Francophone troop- and police-contributing countries rightly note that guidelines, manuals and training materials are frequently available only in English. Stemming from this need, in 2010 the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support created a working group on the use of French, with representatives from all offices and divisions. The working group has defined criteria for the prioritization of documents for translation, namely the urgency and sensitivity of the topic, the long-term relevance of the document, the size and strategic importance of the target audience and the length of the document. The working group has identified 21 documents as a priority for translation, and has entered in an agreement with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management to translate these 21 documents by the end of 2010. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is funding the translation, while the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management contracts external translators and revises the translation.

23. In an information circular (CMS/023/2010) published in July 2010, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) announced its intention to promote the use of French as a working language within the Mission and in any communications with Headquarters. To this end, the Mission will initiate steps to

promote French-language training for all personnel, in addition to Creole language courses for staff. Communications between the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and Headquarters are also in French.

2. Website and Intranets

24. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations produces content for the main United Nations website (see www.un.org/peacekeeping). In coordination with the Department of Public Information, some of this information is available in all six official languages. Four out of the sixteen peacekeeping missions have local bilingual websites. A peace operations Intranet in English and French provides policies and best practices to all field missions globally for over 100,000 staff. Mission-specific Intranets, which are available in missions located in francophone countries, include MINUSTAH, UNOCI and MONUSCO.

3. Department of Political Affairs

25. Multilingualism is fundamental to the work of the Department of Political Affairs and its interactions with Member States, both at Headquarters and in the field, given the Department's global responsibilities in peacemaking and preventive diplomacy. It is also important in the Department's provision of electoral assistance to Member States, and in servicing United Nations bodies, including the Security Council and committees of the General Assembly.

26. Political missions and peacebuilding offices operating under the supervision of the Department of Political Affairs in Africa, Asia and the Middle East carry out their work in official and non-official languages according to the exigencies of each country environment. Staffing priorities, both in New York and the field, reflect the importance attached to language and regional diversity. The Department also pays particular attention to language capabilities in maintaining its roster of electoral experts who can be called upon to work on United Nations electoral assistance projects.

27. As part of its responsibilities to support the Security Council, the Department of Political Affairs publishes the *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council* in all six official languages. The Department also maintains the United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL) in both French and English. Users can access a multitude of texts and documents in the six official languages on the question of Palestine.

4. United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs

28. The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs organizes a variety of special events and programmes in all six official languages in the field of disarmament, produces publications, updates its website and maintains databases for specialized areas.

29. The Office receives biennial voluntary national reports from Member States on the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Countries providing these reports are required to use the six official languages of the United

Nations. Based on feedback given at the Biennial Meeting of States on Small Arms, the Office has initiated the construction of a standardized reporting tool in the form of a template in all six official languages. This tool will capture the information contained in the national reports on the implementation of the Programme of Action and make this information available in all six official languages. The reporting tool is expected to be launched by the end of 2010.

5. Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate

30. In order to promote transparency and the efficient dissemination of information, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate maintains a detailed, interactive website (www.un.org/en/sc/ctc) on behalf of the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the Security Council. The website is accessible in all six official languages.

31. The Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate conducts approximately 15 to 20 comprehensive and focused assessment missions to Member States every year, and most of these visits require interpretation in two or more official languages. For example, from 2005 through mid-2010, the Executive Directorate hired approximately 10 interpreters in all six official languages plus Portuguese to assist delegations of the Executive Directorate, as well as the host countries visited, in conducting on-site missions to States.

6. Department of Safety and Security

32. On the Department of Safety and Security Intranet, a skills inventory database was created that includes the official and non-official language capabilities of all security personnel. This web-based inventory was implemented to assist in the appropriate selection and deployment of security personnel on missions and to help career and professional development, as well as provide opportunities for advancement.

33. Security personnel are often required to provide services in several languages, and sometimes there is a need for them to communicate in languages other than the official ones of the United Nations. The Department strives to recruit multilingual staff; 80 per cent of Safety and Security Services staff know two or more official languages.

34. As of 2010, all vacancy announcements relating to the Division of Regional Operations request two official languages as a requirement for specialized posts. Additional local language requirements may be added to address needs in certain countries.

35. All field security coordination officers and security advisers are encouraged to obtain proficiency in a second official language to enhance their career opportunities. As an incentive, the Department of Safety and Security reimburses its staff in the field up to $500 for taking language lessons.

7. Office of Legal Affairs

36. The Office of Legal Affairs encourages the progressive development of international law and its codification by providing secretariat services. It assists in the precise formulation of international law by preparing research papers and studies and documenting the practice and working methods of United Nations organs. The

Office publishes the *United Nations Juridical Yearbook* in all six official languages and produces reports of International Arbitral Awards in English and French (as mandated), as well as the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs* in English, French and Spanish (as mandated). Alongside these reports, the Office produces a number of other publications, such as the seventh edition of *The Work of the International Law Commission* in all six official languages and *International Instruments Related to the Prevention and Suppression of International Terrorism*, which was published in 2008 in French and English, and in Spanish in 2010, with Chinese and Russian texts to follow.

37. The Office of Legal Affairs also hosts the Audiovisual Library of International Law, which contains a permanent collection of recorded lectures by scholars and lawyers from different regions and legal systems. The Office launched an interpretation project in 2009 to translate all lectures into the six official languages. The historic archives of the Audiovisual Library publishes introductory and procedural history notes in all official languages. In addition, legal and audiovisual materials are provided in all official languages, where available.

8. Office of Administration of Justice

38. The main working languages of the Tribunals established by General Assembly resolution 62/228 are English and French; however, staff members appealing to either Tribunal may do so in any of the six official languages. Judgements are issued in English and French, but, under article 11, paragraph 5, of the Statute of the United Nations Dispute Tribunal and article 10, paragraph 8, of the Statute of the United Nations Appeals Tribunal, an applicant shall receive a copy in the language in which the application or appeal was submitted unless he or she requests a copy in another official language of the Organization.

9. Office of Internal Oversight Services

39. The Office of Internal Oversight Services takes linguistic requirements into account in its work. For a recent evaluation of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, a staff survey was prepared and disseminated in English, French and Spanish. For a survey of Member States, English and French versions were prepared, and a local population survey in Colombia was conducted by Spanish-speaking enumerators, with translation performed by a contracted consultant. For an evaluation of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), interview guides and observation documents for the field-based researcher were translated into Arabic.

E. Humanitarian, economic and social offices

1. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

40. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has made progress since 2008 in ensuring that its information products and websites are available in the six official languages of the United Nations. In over 30 offices globally, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs operates in Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Many staff are fluent in more than two of the six official languages, as well as a number of local languages and dialects.

41. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs flagship brochure, "This is OCHA", is available in Arabic, English, French and Spanish. Press releases and key messages (strategic communications advice on issues related to an acute crisis or chronic emergency) of the Emergency Relief Coordinator are regularly translated. During the response to the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti, the Office ensured that press releases and key messages of the Emergency Relief Coordinator were issued in both English and French.

42. A brochure on the activities of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, called "OCHA on message", is available in Arabic, English, French and Spanish. Topics include access, humanitarian principles, integration and internal displacement.

43. The Office provides multilingual support for World Humanitarian Day. The General Assembly designated 19 August as World Humanitarian Day to honour all humanitarian and United Nations and associated personnel who have lost their lives in the cause of duty and who have worked in the promotion of the humanitarian cause. The Office developed and disseminated publicity materials for the 2009 and 2010 days, which included a fact sheet, posters, leaflets, a media advisory and a two-minute film. This material was all made available in the six official languages of the United Nations.

44. The Office also funds two award-winning websites that support the humanitarian community with multilingual content: ReliefWeb and the Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN). ReliefWeb covers humanitarian emergencies. It collects and distributes reports, appeals, policy papers, maps and other documents from over 3,700 information providers. ReliefWeb is currently being redesigned and will include separate interfaces for French and Spanish content. The Integrated Regional Information Networks is an online humanitarian news and analysis service that delivers reports to over 1 million online readers. The service is delivered in Arabic, English and French.

45. PlusNews, the HIV/AIDS news service of IRIN, produces material in English, French and Portuguese, while IRIN Radio produces programmes in over a dozen languages. Areas covered by IRIN include parts of Asia, the Middle East and all of sub-Saharan Africa. Both the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and IRIN also produce multilingual films and video, generally in English and French, to shed light on humanitarian crises.

2. Department of Economic and Social Affairs

46. The website of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs was recently redesigned, and most of its content was translated by external professional translators and Department staff. The content is now maintained in all six languages by Department staff, and news items and new pages are translated by professional translators. Aside from English, Spanish-language content is the most sought after, while Russian shows the greatest increase in traffic.

47. The Department also produces multilingual materials. The executive summary of *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2010* was distributed in all six official languages at the launch of the report and in related meetings, conferences, lectures and events. The summary is also available free of charge from the website. The 2010 report of the Millennium Development Goals Gap Task Force, "The Global

Partnership for Development at a Critical Juncture", is available in all six official languages. The Department also publishes the United Nations disabilities website (www.un.org/disabilities), which is developed and maintained in all six official languages. The United Nations youth website (www.un.org/youth) is available in Chinese, English, French and Spanish. A guide for youth delegates to the United Nations was translated into all six official languages, as were the logo and slogan of the International Year of Youth.

3. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

48. All professional staff and most local staff of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) must be fluent in English and Spanish, except in the English-speaking Caribbean subheadquarters, where Spanish can be at a more basic level. French and Portuguese are assets; Portuguese is required for work in the ECLAC Brasilia office.

49. Special efforts have been made in recent years to translate the most important ECLAC publications, such as the articles of the *CEPAL Review*, position papers and other relevant publications, into French. For example, a French version of the ECLAC "Handbook for estimating the socio-economic and environmental effects of disasters" was prepared in 2009 to provide assistance to French-speaking countries suffering such effects; it was put to immediate use in Haiti. Since 2008, the *Statistical Yearbook for Latin America and the Caribbean* has also been available in French.

4. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

50. The 14 member countries of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) are all Arabic-speaking, and the working languages of the Commission are Arabic and English. All documents and publications issued by ESCWA are issued in both Arabic and English. The ESCWA session report, issued once every two years at the end of the ministerial meeting of member countries, is translated into French. The Commission also produces a wide range of technical papers and informational material in Arabic and English. As part of its efforts to promote multilingualism, ECSWA contributes to the translation into Arabic of reports of the Secretary-General dealing with development issues such as the Millennium Development Goals.

51. The Commission offers language courses to all staff in Arabic, English, French and Spanish. In addition, the majority of ESCWA staff are bilingual (Arabic and English), if not trilingual (Arabic, English and French).

5. United Nations Environment Programme

52. All six priority-area websites of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) are now available in Chinese, English, French and Spanish. In addition, the websites for World Environment Day, the Sasakawa Prize, Champions of the Earth, the Green Star Awards, the Climate Neutral Network and the Billion Tree Campaign are available in multiple languages. In keeping with the latest online trends, a host of free social-networking tools are being utilized as part of a web-outreach initiative. In 2009, a UNEP channel on YouTube was created, and online groups were created in Chinese and French, enhancing the much-needed interactivity between UNEP and its constituents. The UNEP page on the Chinese social

networking site Ren Ren has attracted over half a million members, while on Facebook the French group "Programme des Nations Unies pour l'Environnement — UNEP" has also attracted numerous followers. Social networking has not only led to an overall increase in UNEP website traffic, but has also contributed to the efforts of UNEP to raise environmental awareness among those between the ages of 18 and 34.

53. It is now UNEP policy that summaries of publications posted on the website are available in Chinese, English, French and Spanish. *Our Planet* and *Tunza* magazines are always produced in English, French and Spanish, and national committees and partners help with the Chinese editions. The *UNEP Year Book* and the Global Environment Outlook series are published in all six official languages of the United Nations.

6. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

54. Since 2008, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has produced over 30 documents in multilingual format. A key example of these documents is the fact sheet "Enforced or involuntary disappearances", which is available online in all six official languages. The Office also produced the following multilingual documents in Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish: *Rule-of-law Tools for Post-Conflict States: Reparations Programmes* and "Durban Review Conference: outcome document".

III. Multilingualism and communication

A. Internal communication

55. The United Nations Intranet, iSeek, maintains pages in English and in French, and publishes stories in both languages. In 2008, an information portal for Member States called deleGATE (www.un.int) was launched in English and French. Statistics show that at the end of 2009 readership on both iSeek and deleGATE in French was 4 per cent of that in English. This raises questions of sustainability, as well as on the need to reflect on ways to make the French content more visible.

56. In 2010, the Department of Public Information launched "language days at the United Nations", six days dedicated to the six official languages of the Organization. Each of the six will be celebrated by the United Nations community in new and creative ways, including information fairs and cultural events showcasing each language through music, art, poetry, food, theatre and film screenings.

B. Public information and outreach

57. Since the inception of the United Nations website (www.un.org) 15 years ago, the Department of Public Information has been striving to achieve parity among the official languages. Website users can now access multimedia content from the main page, including video with subtitles and audio in several languages. Ninety-five per cent of the sites prepared by the Department of Public Information are multilingual. The United Nations introduced a new content management system (Jahia) in 2007 in order to better accommodate web content in all six official languages.

58. In April 2009, Google Analytics was installed on top-layer pages within new language directories (ar/, en/, es/, fr/, ru/ and zh/). When the website was redesigned in May 2009, its architecture was also restructured. Both of these changes enabled more efficient tracking of language usage.

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Total monthly page visits from April 2009 to June 2010 by language

59. Live and on-demand webcast coverage of meetings, conferences and events is provided daily in English and in the original language of the speaker. In November 2009, the first such live webcast covered the Internet Governance Forum in Egypt (see www.un.org/webcast/igf) in the six official languages. The webcast unit also provides closed-captioning in the six official languages for videos on the United Nations Channel on YouTube.

60. United Nations Radio provides daily broadcasts in all six official languages, as well as in Kiswahili and Portuguese. Weekly programmes are provided in Bangla, French Creole, Hindi, Indonesian and Urdu. United Nations Television produces monthly "United Nations in action" programmes in four official languages. The United Nations Office at Nairobi also produces some radio broadcasts in Kiswahili.

61. During the reporting period, fast, accurate, balanced and comprehensive coverage of intergovernmental meetings and conferences continued to be provided in English and French through press releases, in hard copy and on the website. This includes all public meetings of intergovernmental bodies, conferences and special events or sessions, in addition to press conferences, daily noon briefings, statements of the Secretary-General, activities of the Secretary-General and press releases from other United Nations departments and institutions.

62. For several important campaigns, the Department of Public Information developed online and print materials in multiple languages. For example, material for the Millennium Development Goals "We can end poverty 2015" campaign was developed in the six official languages. Twelve additional language versions were created by the United Nations Regional Information Centre in Brussels for use across Europe.

C. Documents and publications

63. The Department of Public Information offers United Nations publications for sale in all official languages. It grants rights to local publishers to translate United Nations publications into various languages. The top 10 titles viewed electronically through the Google Book programme are all in Spanish. The *United Nations Today*, one of the most popular United Nations publications, has been published in English, French and Spanish, and also translated into Farsi, Hindi, Japanese and Turkish. The *United Nations Chronicle* is available in English and French, both in print and online. Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Spanish versions are currently being translated for dissemination online.

64. In 2009, the Department of Public Information digitized and indexed all Security Council documents from 1946 to 1993 in all six official languages. These

documents are accessible on the Official Document System of the United Nations. The project is now focused on General Assembly documentation.

D. United Nations information centres

65. The network of 63 United Nations information centres continues to transmit information on the work of the Organization to people around the world in both official and local languages. These information centres regularly produce information in more than 40 languages and currently maintain websites in 29 local languages.[1] Since 2008, the information centres have translated documents into 63 languages.[2] Currently, 34 information centres produce their own newsletters in 17 local languages.[3] Moreover, nine information centres and services have Facebook accounts (Brussels, Bucharest, Buenos Aires, Bogotá, La Paz, Lima, Mexico City, Vienna and Warsaw) and five have Twitter accounts (Bogotá, Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, Tunis and Vienna) in languages other than English.

66. The information centres are also instrumental in translating and placing op-eds by the Secretary-General and other senior United Nations officials. For example, the information centres placed the Secretary-General's op-ed article "Haiti is not alone" in approximately 80 outlets in 56 countries. The op-ed was translated by the information centres into Danish, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Persian, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovenian, Thai and Turkish.

E. International observances

67. All websites and promotional materials produced to commemorate international observances (e.g., days and years) had versions in the six official languages. Promotional materials, such as brochures and posters, created for the observances are usually featured prominently on relevant United Nations websites as well. Examples include the "Women in peacekeeping: power to empower" poster for the 2009 International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers, which was produced in Arabic, English, French and Spanish; a poster for the first United Nations observance of the Nelson Mandela International Day in 2010, created in the six official languages; and banners in English and Spanish for the International Day of Peace "We Must Disarm" campaign for use at the annual Department of Public Information/non-governmental organization Conference held in Mexico City in 2009.

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[1] Armenian, Azeri, Bahasa Indonesia, Bangla, Belarusian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Finnish, German, Greek, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Italian, Kiswahili, Japanese, Norwegian, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovene, Swedish, Thai, Turkish, Ukrainian and Urdu.

[2] Armenian, Aymara, Azeri, Bangla, Belarusian, Chinanteco del Norte, Ch'ol, Czech, Danish, Dioula, Dutch, Ewe, Finnish, Fulfulde, Georgian, German, Greek, Guarani, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Kazakh, Karaim, Kirundi, Kiswahili, Malgache, Mapuche, Maya, Mazahua, Moore, Myanmar, Nahuatl del Istmo, Ndebele, Nepali, Norwegian, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Quechua, Romanian, Sesotho, Setswana, Sinhala, Siswati, Slovak, Slovene, Swedish, Tamil, Thai, Totonaco de la Costa, Tseltal, Tsotsil, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Uzbek, Venda, Wichi, Xhona, Zapoteco de la Planicie Costera and Zulu.

[3] Armenian, Bahasa Indonesia, Bangla, Czech, Georgian, German, Hindi, Japanese, Kiswahili, Portuguese, Romanian, Sinhala, Tamil, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu and Uzbek.

F. Guided tours

68. Guided tours are one of the most popular means of introducing the United Nations to the general public. They are available at Headquarters and various duty stations in a number of languages. At Headquarters, the guided tours are offered with a tour guide, and since late 2009 an audio tour has been made available in the six official languages. The traditional tours are also offered in German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese and Swedish.

G. Educational outreach

69. The Cyberschoolbus website is available in English, French and Spanish, while the main pages of the Global Model United Nations website for the annual conference for university students worldwide have been translated into the six official languages. For the inaugural conference in Geneva in July 2009, interpretation was provided in English, French and Spanish; for the second conference, which was held in Malaysia, interpretation was provided in Chinese, English, French and Spanish.

IV. Conclusions

70. The United Nations has increasingly improved and sought creative ways to promote multilingualism in all areas of its work. Informing and reaching different audiences in the six official languages, as well as in local languages, through traditional and new media, is essential to inspiring and engaging the world in the aims, purposes and work of the Organization. Promoting multilingualism is, moreover, closely linked to respecting cultural diversity and promoting intercultural dialogue.

71. The Secretariat is making every effort to make content available in all six official languages in a timely manner while ensuring the quality of interpretation and translation. It also uses formal and informal ways to reach out to the global public, the United Nations community and staff in the official languages through its outreach programmes and initiatives. The further promotion of multilingualism in the Secretariat will require increased efforts by all.